



# MONDAY MORNING NEWS

Puget Sound Chapter • National Electrical Contractors Association



**NOVEMBER 23, 2020  
MEETINGS**

**No Meetings Scheduled**

## **CONSTRUCTION FIRM FINED MORE THAN \$92K FOR SAFETY VIOLATIONS**

A construction company with an extensive history of safety problems is being fined more than \$92,000 for serious safety violations. The Department of Labor and Industries opened its latest inspection of Cloise and Mike Construction, Inc, after receiving an anonymous report in May that included photographs showing four employees engaged in roofing work on a steep pitch roof with no fall protection. Inspectors found that, in addition to employees working at heights without proper fall protection, employees were not wearing masks or social distancing, which is a violation of COVID-19 workplace safety rules. The violations occurred on new homes in various cities, including Bremerton, Bainbridge Island, and Tacoma. You can view the official press release by clicking [here](#).

## **CHANGE ORDER MANAGEMENT VIRTUAL CLASSROOM – MARK YOUR CALENDERS**

Join NECA on Wednesday, December 2<sup>nd</sup>, 10:00 AM to 1:00 PM, for a virtual classroom training session on Change Order Management. Effective Change Order Management can dramatically reduce a subcontractor's risk and increase profitability. This four-hour interactive course explores the change order process from a subcontractor's viewpoint and provides participants with hands-on training in recognizing, scoping, pricing, and negotiating change orders. This course culminates in a mock negotiation where participants can immediately practice the skills that they have learned. There is a fee of \$100 for the course. If you are interested in registering, you can click [here](#) for more details. **NOTE:** You will need your NECA National user ID and password to register for this event. For assistance, contact Justin Thayer at 206-824-2150 or [justin@necaseattle.org](mailto:justin@necaseattle.org)

## REMINDER – TOYS FOR TOTS – TRADITION OF GIVING CONTINUES

The long-standing tradition of having a NECA Christmas party might have changed this year, but our commitment to giving to those in need has not. We will once again be partnering with the U.S. Marine Corp Toys for Tots Program to provide Christmas gifts to families in need.

**We are asking our Contractor and Associate Members to let us know if they plan on participating.** Once we have a finalized list of those



participating, we will coordinate a date and time to pick up the presents. We are excited to participate in this wonderful program this year, as there are many families that depend on the Toys for Tots program to give their kids a great Christmas. Justin Thayer, NECA's Director of Safety, will be responsible for coordinating the program. **If you plan on participating, please email Justin at [justin@necaseattle.org](mailto:justin@necaseattle.org).**

## SEATTLE PROPERTY OWNER TO SELL PORTFOLIO – TIP OF THE ICEBERG?

A longtime Seattle commercial property owner says he is selling over \$100 million in assets in the Georgetown neighborhood, due to how the city is handling homelessness. [Larry Russak's](#) grandfather started buying investment properties in 1910, ultimately accumulating a portfolio that included large industrial buildings in Georgetown, the gritty blue-collar district that seems a world away from the gleaming office towers downtown five miles to the north. Russak said he is redeploying the capital throughout the Northwest, from the Oregon Coast to Spokane and Canada. He's buying small assets – bank branches and small retail buildings, including one that houses a cannabis company – things "the REITs (real estate investment trusts) aren't interested in and basically travel below the radar," he said.

Old, worn-out RVs – some of them stolen, according to the city – and shanties line the streets of Georgetown and neighboring Sodo, where the community has been frustrated for years. "I want action. I want the homeless to be held to the same standards that every law-abiding citizen is held to," Sodo business owner [Leslie Shelton](#) told city officials during [a 2019 public meeting](#). She said she and her dog sustained serious injuries when a woman camped in an RV turned her three dogs loose on them because Shelton had reported her for illegal acts, including prostitution.

Russak said he doesn't feel unsafe. He's just tired of the situation. He said he has been selling properties for a couple of years, "ever since the city started doing the crap they've been doing." Public records show a Russak-led limited liability company sold \$59 million worth of Georgetown properties in 2018. Russak said his company also invests in "a few small partnerships" with holdings like the warehouse that Charlie's Produce [bought last month](#). More sales are pending, he said.

"The city of Seattle just doesn't give a damn anymore. There's nobody to talk to," he said.

A spokesperson for Mayor [Jenny Durkan](#) said she met with small business owners in Georgetown as recently as Oct. 29 to discuss ways the city can further support them during the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic and resulting economic downturn. Russak said the problem began when truckers – many of them immigrants from Africa, according to Russak — began parking their rigs on Georgetown streets overnight. He added the city is afraid to cite them for fear of being labeled racist. The mayor's

spokeswoman said police and parking enforcement are not booting or enforcing the 72-hour parking rule for any vehicles, but they continue to issue citations for expired tabs, parking zone violations, non-payment in paid parking and similar infractions.

Russak said it has become "a free-for-all here in Georgetown with (RVs) and tents everywhere." Russak said he and his son-in-law, [Ari Hoffman](#), who ran for City Council last year, met with Seattle officials to talk about ways of sheltering people. His frustration is what he sees as the lack of an action plan. He said that "literally keeps me up nights," and that he might move, perhaps to Idaho.

## **ON THIS DAY IN HISTORY - 1981 - PRESIDENT REAGAN GIVES CIA AUTHORITY TO ESTABLISH THE CONTRAS**

President [Ronald Reagan](#) signs off on a top secret document, National Security Decision Directive 17 (NSDD-17), which gives the Central Intelligence Agency the power to recruit and support a 500-man force of Nicaraguan rebels to conduct covert actions against the leftist Sandinista regime in Nicaragua. A budget of \$19 million was established for that purpose.

NSDD-17 marked the beginning of official U.S. support for the so-called Contras in their struggle against the Sandinistas. The decision came several months after President Reagan directed the CIA to develop a plan to stop what his administration believed to be a serious flow of arms from Nicaragua to rebels in neighboring El Salvador. The administration also believed that the Sandinista regime was merely a cat's paw for the [Soviet Union](#).

CIA officials subsequently set about securing pledges from Honduras to provide training bases and Argentina to give training to about 1,000 rebels (these would be in addition to the 500-man force trained and supplied by the CIA). Beyond the original goal of halting the flow of arms from Nicaragua, the tasks of the rebels were expanded to include spy missions and even paramilitary actions inside Nicaragua. News of the directive leaked out to the press in March 1982, but Reagan administration officials quickly downplayed the significance of the action.

They argued that the CIA plan was designed to support Nicaraguan "moderates" who opposed the Sandinista regime, not the disreputable former soldiers and allies of Anastasio Somoza, whom the Sandinista overthrew in 1979. Deputy Director of the CIA Admiral Bobby R. Inman argued that the \$19 million allocation provided little buying power for arms and other materials, saying that "Nineteen million or \$29 million isn't going to buy you much of any kind these days, and certainly not against that kind of military force."

In the years to come, U.S. support of the Contras became a highly charged issue among the American public. Congressional and public criticisms of the program eventually drove the Reagan administration to subvert congressional bans on aid to the Contras. These actions resulted in what came to be known as the [Iran-Contra scandal](#) of 1986.

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*The most difficult thing is the decision to act, the rest is merely tenacity. The fears are paper tigers. You can do anything you decide to do. You can act to change and control your life; and the procedure, the process is its own reward.*

**Amelia Earhart**

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As of Friday, November 20<sup>th</sup>, there are 325 JW on Book 1 and 187 JW on Book 2. There are currently 40 Commercial Apprentices, 2 S&C Apprentices, and 0 Residential Apprentices available for dispatch. There is 1 First Period Commercial Bootcamp graduate available for dispatch. An additional Inside Wire Bootcamp is scheduled to be completed soon, with additional graduates available November 24<sup>th</sup>. There are 5 Limited Energy Bootcamp graduates available for dispatch. There are also 4 Residential Bootcamp graduates available.